

# TANF STATE PLAN

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



In May 1996, the Alaska State legislature created the **Alaska Temporary Assistance Program**. Temporary Assistance replaced the welfare programs Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) and JOBS. That same year, the Federal government enacted the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Act of 1996. This act provides for the **Temporary Assistance for Needy Families** (TANF) block grant. Temporary Assistance, implemented in 1997, is funded through a combination of state funds and TANF block grant.

The TANF State Plan is required in order for Alaska to receive federal block grant funds. The State Plan describes major program provisions and outlines who is eligible, program participation requirements, and program benefits.

All needy Alaskan families with dependent children may apply to participate in the Temporary Assistance Program. To qualify, families establish eligibility based on family composition and need. To continue to participate in the program, parents or caretaker relatives must participate in work activities within two years.

The Temporary Assistance Program has requirements not found in earlier welfare programs. Families may receive cash benefits for only 60 months (5 years) unless the family qualifies for a time-limit exemption. Temporary Assistance uses the "Work First" approach to promote family self-sufficiency. Families build on their strengths and actively seek employment. A family completes their own Family Self-sufficiency Plan, and an employment

assessment. Families must participate in work activities, complete their self-sufficiency plan, and cooperate with child support enforcement. Minor teen parents must live with a parent or other approved living arrangement and continue their education.

Temporary Assistance includes cash benefits to help pay for basic living expenses while a family makes progress toward economic independence through employment. Temporary Assistance may purchase or reimburse the costs of services determined necessary to support work activities such as childcare, transportation and job related training.

Temporary Assistance promotes strong partnerships with local governments, Native organizations, non-profit and profit organizations in an effort to promote jobs and identify effective community work experience.

The Alaska Department of Health and Social Services evaluates the Temporary Assistance program by using data-based performance measures of success. These measures include the number of adults with earnings, the number who retain employment and increase their earnings, and the number who leave assistance with employment and do not return.



### Alaska Temporary Assistance Goal

*Move Alaskans  
from welfare into  
jobs so they can  
support their  
families,  
and maintain a  
safety net for those  
truly in need.*

